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form itself depended on a literary spirit beneath it.

We notice, finally, a tendency to the erection of *unduly exalted critical standards*. There is such a thing as "the despotism of the ideal;" as the holding of so high a model as to discourage, if not destroy, all effort. ADDISON, in his criticism of 'Paradise Lost,' is at pains to admit, at the outset, that there are spots in the sun. There is a valid sense in which it is the part of an ingenuous critic not to see too much. Here, we touch again upon the besetting sin of the critic, that of pride of opinion, whereby he is led so to magnify his office as to make it impossible for authors to meet his imperious demands. The first article in the creed of the critic must be his confession of faith in human fallibility. Approximate results along the lines of literary effort are all that can be expected, and sweeping condemnation should be withheld in the presence of substantial merit and the promise of still better results. We are speaking of the tyrannical exactions of much of our criticism; of the undue application of "executive severity;" of requisites demanded by the critic to which he himself has never been able to conform and for the realization of which he has at present no right to look. Strange to say, these exorbitant conditions are often made with special emphasis by those who have the least claim to make them—by the younger censors of the day. It is somewhat in the line of the serio-comic to mark the attitude assumed by such self-appointed novices, as they sit in judgment upon their elders and mental and literary superiors. Still, they pose as critics; lay down the law in its entirety; mercilessly rule out any concessions to human limitations, and insist that all be done as "nominated in the bond." Even old DOCTOR JOHNSON, autocrat that he was, failed to go as far as this, while such technical critics as DRYDEN and POPE always postulated a degree of error on the part of the wisest. A critic, to succeed, need not show that the subject of his criticism is totally incompetent. Criticism is, after all, constructive. In fine, we are dealing, here, with the very essence of hyper-criticism, as dogmatic, facetious and exacting. It is a phase of the "higher criticism" of the

day, outside of theology. There are critics and there are critics. There is a measure of personal independence of judgment germane to the critic's function, but it need not pass over into offensive assertion. There is a degree of accuracy of detail involved in the very idea of criticism as a science, but it need not become an end in itself. There must be, in all judicial procedure in the sphere of letters, a standard sufficiently high to excite the best ambitions, but it need not lie within the region of the superhuman.

Despite all dogmatism, mechanical detail and exaction, there are some books and authors that have stood all legitimate tests, and are, as we confess, above criticism. It is quite too late for the most sagacious among us to subject DANTE and SHAKESPEARE to a new examination with the possible result of classifying them with MARINI, POLLOCK and TUPPER.

In a word, literary criticism is a vital part of literature itself and not an extraneous science looking in upon authorship from the outside as if it were a something merely for the official examination of the inspector. The unnatural severance of these two things is a growing grievance among us, nor can a more timely service be done for each of them, at present, than the emphasis of their mutual influence and co-operative working in the one wide department of letters to which they belong. Authors and critics must have common aims and interests; must confer and legislate and act in the spirit of amity; must interchange, at times, their respective functions, and together seek, throughout their work, the same beneficent results in the sphere of style and literary art.

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FÖRSTERS 'CHEVALIER AU LION' AND THE MABINOGI.

Every student of the Round Table Romances will feel a debt of gratitude to WENDELIN FÖRSTER for his beautiful and careful edition of 'Christian of Troyes,' and there are probably few who will presume to criticize his work in normalizing the text, or the correctness of his judgments regarding the relation

of the numerous manuscripts to one another. But quite as surely no one can read the Introduction to the 'Chevalier au Lion' without being struck by the weakness of the argument by which the eminent Romance scholar seeks to establish the Mabinogi, 'Iarlles y Ffynnwawn' as a translation of CHRISTIAN's work, and to maintain the priority in treating this subject for his favorite poet.

GASTON PARIS has established the probability of an Anglo-Norman source for most of the Round-Table Romances, but I do not know that any one has taken the pains to show that, whatever may be the result of more careful researches, FÖRSTER has failed in this case to establish the relation which he declares to exist. FÖRSTER's arguments are as follows:

I. There is so great a resemblance between the Mabinogi and the 'Chevalier au Lion,' that one must be a translation or version of the other; and (a) as CHRISTIAN mentions without hesitation the sources of his other poems and does not do so here, and (b) as CHRISTIAN shows in his other works very great originality, while if he followed the Mabinogi he has been here a servile imitator, and (c) as there are certain very literal resemblances which could exist in the Mabinogi only on the supposition of an incorrect translation from the French, therefore, we must conclude that the Mabinogi is based upon the work of CHRISTIAN.

II. There are but inconsiderable Celtic features in the Romance in either shape. "So finden wir dass, abgesehen von der Örtlichkeit und den Namen der handelnden Personen, keine Spur von keltischem Stoffe zu finden ist." (FÖRSTER, 'Löwenritter,' Einleit., xxi, and again xxii).

III. The characteristic features of the work in either form are French of the Middle Ages.

IV. The theory of GASTON PARIS of an Anglo-Norman source for both the Mabinogi and the 'Chevalier au Lion' falls to the ground in default of specific proofs.

Taking up these arguments in order:

I. Any one who reads the two works without prejudice will certainly question the correctness of the assertion that they bear a close resemblance one to the other;

1. In style, for instance, an influence of which one is least able to render account and from which, therefore, it is most difficult to escape, so often the clue by which literary forgers are detected, it would be hard to find two works treating the same subject which are more different. And yet the plagiarist of the Middle Ages recognized nothing dishonorable in his performance, and took no pains to cover his tracks. The 'Chevalier au Lion' is discursive, ornate, full of comparisons and figures of every sort, as well as of sage counsels, opinions and proverbs. Of all this there is almost nothing in the Mabinogi. There is scarcely a page of the former which has not a figure of speech, and one often finds several on a half-page. One may search from one end of the latter to the other without finding as many figures as on many a page of CHRISTIAN.

Now, as the figures of CHRISTIAN are so numerous and so admirable, how is it possible that the Mabinogi should have followed him as closely as FÖRSTER says ("Das Mabinogion schmiegt sich nun dem französischen Roman ganz eng an, nicht nur in der Reihenfolge der Begebenheiten, sondern meist auch in der einzelnen Ausführung derselben." 'Einl.', xxv), without borrowing its greatest beauties—its comparisons? Consider, for instance, the 'Iwein' of HARTMANN, which everyone acknowledges to be a translation, and in which the figures are nearly all borrowed from CHRISTIAN. That is what one would expect of a translation. Remark, moreover, that this feature of the presence or absence of numerous detailed and well-executed figures is a characteristic mark which distinguishes the more recent Court Epic from the older Folk Epic, and that this consideration as well as many others would lead us to think the 'Chevalier au Lion' later than the Mabinogi, for the latter has all of the marks of a Folk Epic.

2. Furthermore, the Mabinogi is very much shorter than the 'Chevalier au Lion,' whereas we know that the whole tendency of the twelfth and following centuries was to increase the length of re-told tales. Is it not then improbable that a Welsh story-teller should work over this charming and by no

means wearisome composition of CHRISTIAN and reduce it by half, cutting out such interesting episodes as that of the "Castle of the Hevy Sorow?" To show more clearly the difference in this respect, I give a table with the relative amount of space devoted to each adventure:

THE MABINOGL.	THE 'CHEVALIER AU LION.'
Introduction..... .036	Introduction..... .025
Tale of Kynon..... .226	Tale of Calogrenanz... .06+
Interlude..... .02	Interlude..... .02+
Adventure of Owen, to Gualchmai's Quest.. .27	Adventure of Yvain, to the Quest..... .20+
The Quest for Owen... .13	The Quest for Yvain... .07
Episode of the Lady with the Ointment... .11	Episode of the Lady with the Ointment... .10+
Defense of the Lion and all that follows..... .20	Defense of the Lion and all that follows. .51+
	At the hermitage..... .02+
	Yvain finds Lunette... .04+
	Yvain conquers the gi- ant..... .08+
	Yvain saves Lunette... .05
	*The rival sisters..... .07+
	*The Castle of the Hevy Sorow..... .11+
	*The Duel with Gau- vain..... .10+
	*The Reconciliation.. .04

a. The argument that CHRISTIAN does not in this instance indicate the source of his poem, while he has done so more or less frankly in case of the others, is by no means a capital point. In the first place there are three allusions to a source, while FÖRSTER finds but one. The allusions are:

Laudenet dont on note un lai, l. 2153;

Et di li contes, ce me sanble,
Que li dui compaignon ansanble
* * * *

Ne vostrent en vile desçandre," l. 2685-8.

Qu' onques plus conter n'an oï,
Ne ja plus n'an orroiz conter,
S'an n'i viaut mançonge ajoster. l. 6816-18.

But it is well known that little dependence can be placed in the declarations of this sort in the poets of the Middle Ages. In some familiar cases of wholesale cribbing the operator has made no acknowledgment of his obligations, and, on the other hand, it was common to refer to a fictitious source in order to win more authority and credence. If such references are of any value, it seems to me that the above would indicate CHRISTIAN's debt

*These episodes are wanting in the Mabinogi.

to some source or sources. He may have employed an oral tradition, as GASTON PARIS thinks, without knowing any name or author to quote, or he may have used a written source without feeling under any obligation to give more definite credit, in the consciousness of having re-created it and made it his own.

b. Whatever the source of his material, and especially if it was the Mabinogi, he has made a new thing of it. In all the details of the narrative, as well as in the style, he has exercised an artistic power amounting to creative genius. He has changed the matter which came to his hands quite as much as SHAKESPEARE did the tales which he has immortalized (and for which, by the way, he never rendered acknowledgment), and the result may be called his own as fairly as in the case of the great dramatist.

c. The verbal correspondences which FÖRSTER cites ("Einl.," xxvi) are by no means so striking as he thinks, and the last, especially, which he considers proof positive of the Mabinogi being a translation from CHRISTIAN, because of an apparent misapprehension of the French, permits of several explanations without this supposition. CHRISTIAN says that the tempest and the hail *despeçoient* the trees, and, a few verses further on, that the birds came and sat upon the tree after the storm "Que n'i paroient branche ne feuille" (v. 462). The Mabinogi says: "And when I looked upon the tree [after the storm] there was not a single leaf upon it, and with that the birds lighted upon the tree and sang." (Mabinogion, vol. i, p. 49). This does seem to indicate a connection between the two works, but by no means necessarily such as suggested by FÖRSTER. *Despeçoient* is a strong word and certainly means as much as *to deprive of leaves*, while "Que n'i paroient branche ne feuille" does not imply perforce that the tree had leaves upon it at the time; it is merely a hyperbole for saying that the birds were very numerous. It is interesting to note that HARTMANN uses the same expression as CHRISTIAN, "Daz ich der este schîn verlôs, und ouch des loubes lützel kos" (LACHMANN'S 'Iwein,' vv. 613-614), and afterward lets the storm strip the trees of leaves "as though they were burned."

But even admitting that these passages were copied from CHRISTIAN, there is another theory possible: As the manuscript of the Mabinogi comes from the fourteenth century, it is more than possible that the amateur of the subject who wrote it knew CHRISTIAN, and he might have introduced here and there phrases of his which pleased him; or such phrases, annotated on the margins of a previous manuscript, might have been incorporated by a scribe into the body of the work, without compelling us to assume that the Welsh legends were translated from CHRISTIAN.

From the above considerations, I do not think it bold to say that the resemblance between the two works is not so great as to compel the conclusion that one is a version or translation of the other, and I quote in his own refutation FÖRSTER's statement ("Einl.," xxii, 2), "Das Mabinogion ist eine *freie, etwas gekürzte* Übersetzung des französischen Romans."

II. But it is in the treatment of his second proposition that FÖRSTER shows the greatest weakness of his position. After having said that the 'Yvain' contains nothing Celtic except the names and the localities, he continues: "Allen [keltischen Stoffen] ist das Übernatürliche gemeinsam. . . Jedermann denkt sofort an die Zauberquelle, den Zauberring, und auch ich habe nichts dagegen dieses *Beiwerk* als keltisch gelten zu lassen, eben so wie den Riesen den Yvainbe siegt" ("Einl.," xvii), and (ib., xvi) "der Kern des Löwenritters ist vielleicht ein alter Bekannter, der aus weiter Ferne auf vielen Umwegen nach Frankreich gekommen war, nämlich, die Sage von der leichtgetrösteten Wittwe—um diesen Kern ist alles Andere gewickelt."

This is certainly extraordinary—to declare that the poem has nothing Celtic but the names and places, and on the same page to mention as Celtic elements such as the fountain, the giant, the ring, the magic ointment, which make full half of CHRISTIAN's work and almost the whole of the Mabinogi, and forthwith to sweep this all away as unessential,—certainly a novice may be pardoned an exclamation point over it!

Moreover, FÖRSTER gives no reason beyond his own dictum to convince his readers that the Widow of Ephesus is the nucleus of the poem. Certainly an easily consolable widow

is not so rare a phenomenon that one must go all the way to Ephesus to find her. More than one critic has called attention to the danger of trying to connect all narratives of a similar subject by bonds of derivation, or of wishing to find a simple explanation for all the phenomena of the same, or apparently the same, kind; for instance, the solar myth which has been exploited so mercilessly (even our hero has suffered in this way at the hands of K. W. OSTERWALD, "Iwein ein keltischer Frühlingsgott."). However, one may admit that our widow is really a descendant of the widow of Ephesus without by any means seeing how she makes the nucleus of the poem. This episode makes no more than a tenth part of the work in either of the forms we are considering, and one might say of it, and seemingly with more right, what FÖRSTER says of the incidents that occupy more than half of the poem, that it is unessential. Without some strong argument to the contrary, one is more inclined to agree with WM. MÜLLER, who says: "Den Kern des ganzen bildet hier die wunderbare sturm-und-gewittererregende Quelle im Walde von Broceliande."

III. After what has been said above, it is hardly necessary to controvert expressly the third proposition, that the characteristic traits of the work are French of the Middle Ages. As far as it touches the discussion it rests on an ambiguity. In the Mabinogi, one may safely say, by FÖRSTER's own criteria, that there is nothing French.—The easily consolable widow, the "nucleus" of the tale, is from the Orient. The incident of the lion is certainly not French. It is probably very old, and is found in many and varied forms. In fact, in the 'Chevalier au Lion,' as far as it runs parallel with the Mabinogi, there is but one *motif* which is characteristically French, and that is the reproach of uxoriousness—*recreanté, Verliegen*, and this is wanting in the Welsh story.

But in the style, in the manner of presenting the incidents, in the views of life which are mingled with the descriptions of combats, in all which makes the atmosphere of the poem, the French romance has enough of its own to justify CHRISTIAN's title to authorship, and to a high degree of originality.

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